The Relation Between University Students' English Vocabulary Size and Bilingual (English-Indonesian) Interaction in EFL Class

Relasi Antara Ukuran Kosa-Kata Bahasa Inggris Dengan Interaksi Dwi Bahasa (Inggris-Indonesia) Di Kelas Bahasa Inggris

Arfandy Eka Prastika*, Kisman Salija, Muhammad Basri
English Education Study Program, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia
Corresponding author : arfandyprastika@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to find out the relation between students' vocabulary size with their bilingual interaction ability in EFL class, at once with their perception towards bilingual interaction itself. This research was conducted in post-graduation program of State University of Makassar with 5 of its students as subjects. The result of this research showed that students' vocabulary size have direct impact towards their ability in EFL class' bilingual interaction aspects which are self-motivation, self-confidence, range of conversation, and word choice. This research concluded that vocabulary size have impact towards students' bilingual interaction process in EFL class.

Keywords: Vocabulary size, Bilingual interaction, student, EFL class

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan mencari hubungan antara ukuran kosa-kata bahasa inggris yang dimiliki siswa dengan kemampuan berinteraksi dwi-bahasa di dalam kelas Bahasa inggris, beserta tanggapan siswa terhadap interaksi dwi-bahasa di dalam kelas bahasa inggris. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di program pasca-sarjana Universitas Negeri Makassar dengan 5 orang siswanya sebagai subyek dari penelitian ini. Hasil dari penelitian ini menjukkan bahwa ukuran kosa-kata yang dimiliki siswa memiliki kaitan langsung dengan kemampuan berinteraksi para siswa di dalam proses interaksi di dalam kelas Bahasa inggris yaitu dari segi; kepercaya-dirian, motivasi diri, jarak percakapan, dan pemilihan kata. Dari hasil penelitian ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa ukuran kosa kata Bahasa inggris siswa sangat mempengaruhi kelancaran dari proses interaksi di dalam kelas Bahasa inggris.

Kata Kunci: Ukuran Kosa-Kata, Interaksi dwi-bahasa, siswa, kelas Bahasa inggris

1. BACKGROUND

Bilingual means being able to communicate in two languages. For example, a person can communicate in Chinese and Bahasa or in British and American Sign Language. A person can become bilingual because they were raised in a bilingual home or because they learn a second language later in life. Roughly, 70% of people in the world are bilingual or multilingual; (Trask, 1999), this shows rough indication that bilingualism become the norm in majority of world society and urges the necessity of investigating the impact of bilingualism in the process of teaching and learning foreign language.

Students in education institute such as school or even university tend to forget that the basic thing to learn language is the vocabulary building, they seems more focussed on the structure of the language so they can produce what they called "the right sentence" but in fact to produce fluency in spoken words they must have the right word to say in that content of sentence they are about to speak. this opinion is supported by Brown (1995) who ever stated "Vocabulary is the foundation to build languages, which plays a fundamental role in communication". Finocchiaro (1974) suggested that, teaching and learning vocabulary is an activity where the teacher and the students reintroduce some vocabulary items with all the structure and in the entire situation in which they can logically be used.

The process acquiring new vocabularies can be differ by the form of interaction provided by the teacher to student or from among the student themselves it can be as a form of command, feedback, correction, or complement given by the teacher to students or basic conversation among the student while the classroom activity is ongoing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Vocabulary

Learning a new language cannot be separated from vocabulary. Meaning that in learning a new language people have to know its vocabulary. Vocabulary can be defined in various ways. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to the native speaker, using language in different context, reading, or watching television.

Brown (1995), vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speakers of language might use. Brown (1995) also state that vocabulary is the only system involved of alphabetical order.

Brown (2001) defines vocabulary as the words we teach in the foreign language. Brown (2001) views vocabulary items as a boring list of words that must be defined and memorized by the students, lexical forms are seen in their central role in contextualized, meaningful language.

2.2. Interaction

Some experts state definitions of interaction. For example, Brown (2014) states that in the era of communicative language teaching, interaction is the heart of communication. From this concept, it is stated that interaction is an important thing for language teachers. Since communication is the main factor in the communicative language teaching, communication must appear in every language learning activity. Here, students are supposed to be able to communicate and interact with others in language learning contexts. They will learn how to communicate and interact through the interaction itself. Thus, the communication in the language teaching and learning classroom can be seen from the interaction among the language classroom participants.

Brown (2014) explains that interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. This statement involves a simple concept of the process of interaction. It can be simply stated that interaction is a process to get an idea out of one person's head and into the head of another person and vice versa.

The definition of interaction is also stated by Malamah (1987) defines that interaction means acting reciprocally, acting upon each other. This definition contains a concept that there are two parties involving in an interaction. An interaction will occur when both parties act upon each other. Then, the acts of one party will make another party react to them. This reaction

will influence the next action. Thus, interaction depends on the actions of both parties.

In Shorts, interaction can be explained as a process of communication that takes two or more people on giving and receiving message in the form of ideas, feeling or opinions. In promoting interaction in a classroom, the situation in the classroom should support the teacher and students to interact with each other.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This research will use qualitative research in nature applying descriptive design. Through which the researcher focused on in depth study of smaller samples. Yin (2009) stated that Case study research is usually defined as follows: A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

In addition In this research, the researcher does not do some treatments or set design to the participants but all events, circumstances, aspects, and components that researcher need were found naturally throught the interaction between the students in the classroom. A case study is a report of descriptive information on data of research of an experiment, project, event, or analysis

3.2. Research Instrument

1) Classroom observation
2) Vocabulary Size Test
3) Interview guide

3.3. Technique of Data Collection

1) **Classroom observation**

For the purpose of collection the necessary data in order to understand the subjects, the researcher conducted classroom observation, the researcher then classify the students based on their activeness on the learning process of the classroom to find suitable candidate of subjects.

2) **Vocabulary Size Test**

The selected subjects then directed to answer multiple based questions to determine their vocabulary size with the assistance of myvocabularysize.com which where the question was picked and counted the right answer from each participant then categorized it with Brown Corpus word coverage table to find out the overall word coverage of student may possessed.

3) **Interview Guide**

To find out the students' perception towards bilingual interaction, the students then directed to fill an interview guide provided by the researcher in order to find the necessity responses towards bilingual interaction itself.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings

From the responses gained from the subjects, the researcher found that the subjects' vocabulary size is relatively high; the result of vocabulary size test taken by the subjects can be seen in this following table

Table 1. The Result of Vocabulary Size Test

Subject	Total of question answered correctly	Size estimate (at least)	Conclusion
A	105	10500 words	Able to produce productive English
B	99	9900 words	Able to produce productive English
C	106	10600 words	Able to produce productive English
D	111	11100 words	Able to produce productive English
E	114	11400 words	Able to produce productive English

The finding of this part can be used as the answer to the first problem, which stated what the vocabulary size of university student is, the result gave the portrait how education level can influence the students' vocabulary size.

Furthermore, The way vocabulary size of a student have impact for students' bilingual interaction in EFL class can be measured from several way, one of which

is by knowing what is the students' responses towards how they think about vocabulary size and bilingual interaction itself. Hence, the researcher then provided several interview guide to find out how students express how they think vocabulary size can have impact on their bilingual interaction process in EFL class.

The extract from one of the students' interview can be viewed on the following one.

Extract 1.
Question 1.
Do you perform bilingual interaction?
Question 2.
Do you understand the process of bilingual interaction?
Question 3.
Do you able to retract any new vocabulary from bilingual interaction in classroom?
Question 4.
Can you make any sentences based on your newly acquired vocabulary from bilingual interaction?
Question 5.
Do you think vocabulary size have impact to your bilingual interaction process?
Question 6.
What do you think about the lecturer who is using code mixing and code switching in their teaching process?

Table 2. The Extract From One Of The Students

NO	Extract
1	Yes, sometimes I do perform bilingual interaction when I have to answer lecturer's question by combining English and Indonesian. **[Question 1]**
2	Yes, the process is much like normal conversation but using and combining between 2 languages **[Question 2]**
3	Sometimes, when I am paying attention to someone who speak **[Question 3]**
4	I can make a sentence using new vocabulary if I know the true meaning of that new word **[Question 4]**
5	Yes, I think by having more vocabularies, the conversation will be more easy to do **[Question 5]**
6	Yes I am sure it can be more understandable when lecturer using both English and Indonesian while explaining the lesson **[Question 6]**

4.2. Discussion
1) The vocabulary size of university student.
After completing the questionnaire, the data from the samples are collected and examined by researcher; the subjects taken the questionnaire are the students of Universitas Negeri Makassar which are from 1 specific class in English Education department.

The subjects are taken based from their level of interaction in classroom, the specific level that the subjects shown in the phase of observation conducted by the researcher is Level III in Carter & Lange (2005) level of interactions which is complex interactions.

The subjects manage to acquire the specific manner categorized either in that level, by being able to makes various responses in response to instructional stimulus from the lecturer or friends surrounding the subjects in EFL classroom.

In process of determining the vocabulary size of the subjects, the researcher used Vocabulary size test spearheaded by Paul Nation (1999), the 140 multiple answer based questions are given to the subjects in order to find out the roughly estimation of subjects vocabulary size.

By knowing the vocabulary size of the subjects, the researcher expected to find a sighting around subjects' capability and any factors that supported the activeness of a student in the process of bilingual interactions in EFL classroom. Much like Richard and Renandya (2002) started that vocabulary are the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how learners speak, listen, read, and write.

The direct relation between the acquisitions of sufficient English vocabulary with the effectiveness of interactions can be easy to spot by the outcome of the interactions. As a tool of communication, language has defining role in determining
The outcome of an interaction, it has several factor which directly affecting how the interactions go such as words, Morphemes, and phonemes Chaer and Agustina (2004)

The subjects' ability to acquire such high word coverage, can be a supporting factor to build confidence in performing interactions in EFL class regardless of any class conditions and personal matter.

This also can be indicate as the reflection of subjects' education level being university student. Keraf (1997)

To topped all of that, vocabulary once again can be a defining factors in building interactions, the urge of performing any communications is really depending of someone's acquisition of its language vocabulary regardless of its kind.

Vocabulary size have impact for students' bilingual interaction in EFL class

2) Vocabulary size have impact for students' bilingual interaction in EFL class

From the various responses acquired from the Questionnaire, the subjects have several opinion surrounding this topic, such as how they think about vocabulary size and bilingual interaction as well as the connections between them.

One particular example on how subjects thought that vocabulary size directly affecting their capability in performing bilingual interaction is reflected in most of their responses stated, "the vocabulary size have a significant role in determining their continuity in performing any interactions either towards the lecturer involved in classroom activity and their friends around them".

One of the subjects even emphasize that she will only choose friends that she consider capable enough to make any conversation with her. This kind of limitations are the consequence of not having enough friends who possessed sufficient vocabulary to support their conversation. This problem are not from the subject's specific preference based on their friend's personality rather this is about the subject's preferences about the conversations' quality and process itself. This statement based on subject's response stated, "I think they need more vocabulary as well" this is a clear indication of the subject's urge to find an interaction partner who has equal vocabulary size.

Another significant thing which boosted when students has sufficient vocabulary size is the confidence in performing any interactions towards friends and the lecturer, this reflexed by one of the subjects stated "I feel more confident to speak in front of the class because I'm sure my friend and lecturer will understand what I talk". Hence this confidence comes from the subjects manages to get the support she need around the class. Her friends will sincerely help her

whenever she forgets the English word she forget. If the student has confidence in trying to express the language, ready to establish the communication furthermore, then the process of bilingual interactions in EFL class is achieved.

The students in the EFL class can make overall size of vocabulary also directly improving the range of conversation; one subject stated "Of course, I think that is the basic step in every language learning. In fact, you will have limited range of conversation if you don't have sufficient vocabulary, and also I think I will be more confident in having conversation when i know a lot of vocabulary". The subject understand that vocabulary is the basic thing to improve in language learning. The subject also mentioned that the vocabulary size could limit her range of conversation. Vocabulary indeed the most important element in language and language learning, this factor can be directly affecting the overall outcome of the intended thing you want to express.

The last aspect on what vocabulary size could affect in bilingual interaction is the word choice. By having sufficient vocabulary size, the student able to make conversation using proper words according to its context. One of the subjects stated "I think making sentence from the words we know is not too difficult to do, but of course I will make sentence based on its definition and put it in the correct sentence according to its context". This is to the response on question if the subject able to make sentence out of newly vocabulary that she made from the conversation/interaction she heard/experience. The subject understand the importance of using words on its original context in regards of achieving productive language. To produce significant productive language, the importance of word choice cannot be ignored as the way to fully deliver the intended meaning of message we want to deliver.

Vocabulary size and the process of acquiring vocabulary cannot be denied as the basic of student's "starter kit" in the process of language learning, the process itself comes from several way which one of the by practicing bilingual interaction. Within the interaction itself, the student will able to exchange new vocabularies with fellow students. One of the subject responses stated' "Yes, sometimes I will directly ask my friends what the meaning of the word is". This

indicates the willingness of subject in acquiring new vocabularies in the middle of interactions' process.

Overall the subjects has able to perform bilingual interaction in EFL class and due to their vocabulary size, they have been able to practice conversation with others in that class with self-confidence. The Researcher then able to make a projection on how the vocabulary size affecting the process of bilingual interaction in EFL class by presenting following image.

Image 1. How Vocabulary Size Impacting Students' Bilingual Interaction.
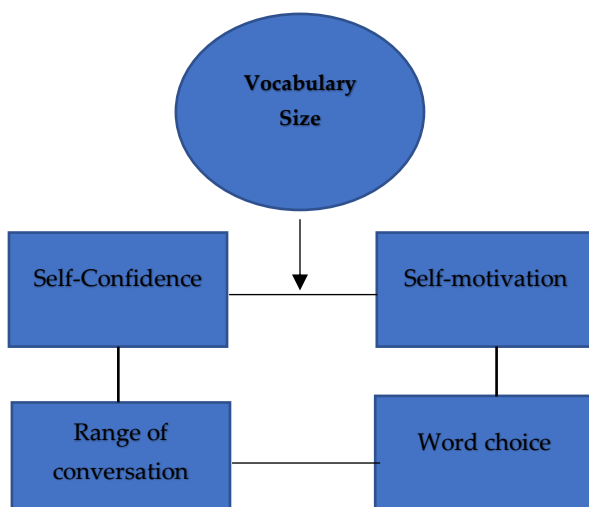
3) Students' perception on bilingual interaction.
After the subjects provided the responses on how the perceive bilingual interactions, several things can be analyse related on how students perceive bilingual interactions. This process aims the personal opinion of the subjects around bilingual interactions for further understanding of bilingual interaction.

By having an understanding on previously mentioned parts, the researcher will able to recognize which part can improve for further effort to achieve better result on utilizing bilingual interaction in language learning process.

The Researcher found that some Subjects tend to have positive opinion on several social media influencers or entertainer who sometimes are using code mixing as way to speak in their social media platform or on the television, the subjects find it interesting to the way they talked and even trying to copy it by performing code mixing by themselves. Regardless from either it was their truly way of speaking since some those

influencers are indeed have multi nationality, their frequency of visiting other countries, or it just a gimmick to get more fans or attention, the subjects still somewhat amaze to that particular way to deliver an interaction.

Another significance reason why subjects use code-mix in their interaction process is due to overcome each other's low competency in the language competency. This creates gap between those who has higher vocabulary size sometimes cannot utter their message to all students, and the way their overcome such challenge is by using code mixing in their part of speech. This somehow helps to make the gap smaller when the speaker include the code mixing in it, then the listener able to understand it.

5. CONCLUSION

Students' vocabulary is the most important component in determining the student's language proficiency achieving process; this is because every language learner needs to have sufficient vocabulary in order to produce productive language, vocabulary is a must-have in every form of language. Lack of vocabulary means limited core item to produce a meaningful message or even cannot deliver the intended message properly.

It is said that sentence without grammar but with words which contains the message of speaker can still be understand without any proper grammar within but different in vice-versa. In the EFL classroom, the students will still able to utter their message without proper grammar or even mixing two language (L1+L2) and their friends able to understand it well too.

Acquiring such sufficient vocabulary for University student are the main capital to expand their creativity in language proficiency and that is a big thing to have. The confidence emerge when a learners have a wide range of vocabulary, they do not have to be bound with limited word choice to express the message they intended to.

From the research conducted by the researcher, it is concluded that vocabulary indeed have impact to several aspects in students bilingual interactions capability, the researcher found that students' overall vocabulary size directly affecting the self-confidence, self-motivation, range of conversation, and word

choice. The subjects highlighted that the vocabulary gave them several beneficial factors in supporting their bilingual interactions process.

The use of code switching and code mixing has become the staple choice to interact among students of language acquisition class and in bilingual interactions process, this trend of combining and mixing between L1 and L2 in every kind of interactions also proven to be some way to acquiring new vocabulary.

REFERENCES

Abdul. C., A. (2004). *Sosiolinguistik Perkenalan Awal.* Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Brown, D. H. (1995). *Vocabulary, semantics, and Language Education.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, D. H. (2001). *Teaching by Principle.* New York: Longman.

Brown, D. H. (2014). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching.* Upper Sadle River: United States: Pearson Education (US).

Finocchiaro, M. (1974). *Teaching English as a Second Language.* Harper and Row.

Keraf, G. (1997). *Komposisi: Sebuah pengantar kemahiran bahasa.* Jakarta: Nusa Indah.

Malamah, A. A. (1987). *Classrom Interaaction.* Oxford University Press.

Nation, P. (1999). *A vocabulary-size test of controlled productive ability.* Sage Publication.

Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language. Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice.* Cambridge University Press.

Trask, R. L. (1999). The effects of Family Structure on the development of Bilingality. *Psychology.*

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research and Applications 6th Edition.* COSMOS Corporation.